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MAYOR

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07102

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For Immediate Release

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MAYOR JAMES STATEMENT ON COLUMBUS HOMES IMPLOSION

Today marks the end of an era for public housing in Newark and a new beginning. The long-awaited implosion of Columbus Homes has finally become a reality fulfilling one of my major campaign promises in 1986, but more importantly signifying our City's on-going progress.

The site of Columbus Homes is probably one of the city's most desirable locations for developers. Lucian Commons has already broken ground at the adjacent location and has capitalized on this prime investment site.

Undoubtedly the proximity to the Erie Lackawanna Plaza, major highways, downtown business district, Branch Brook Park, and the City's many recreational and cultural facilities will attract many people back to Newark while encouraging the development of quality housing and ratables.

In the past eight years housing units have gone up in each of the city's five wards and are testament to this administration's commitment to urban revitalization. Through innovative cost-effective initiatives, coupled with strong public/private partnerships, Newark has successfully constructed over 3,500 new housing units, while building ratables and attracting outsiders to our city.

Our Housing Authority, under Executive Director Harold Lucas and Chairperson Gloria Cartwright and her board have successfully moved the Authority off HUD's troubled list and begun the building of the 1700 new units which have paved the way for us to take down Columbus Homes today.

We have relocated residents to quality attractive housing units and will continue to stabilize our neighborhoods, and ensure that Newark's renaissance reaches uptown, downtown, and midtown. While we maintain our commitment to building housing for the poor, we are not committed to building poor housing. My administration will build on the success of the destruction of Columbus Homes and continue to construct the type of homes that instill community pride and beautify our neighborhoods.

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